

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 05240

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS CONFERENCE

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH KRATZER IN VIENNA, GOLDSCHMIDT INQUIRED WHETHER SUBJECT OF FRENCH URANIUM ENRICHMENTS ARRANGEMENTS WITH SOVIET UNION HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN RECENT US-FRENCH CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON. SHOWING RELATIVELY LITTLE INTEREST IN REACTOR MANUFACTURERS LICENSING ISSUE TO WHICH GIRARD HAD GIVEN MAJOR EMPHASIS, GOLDSCHMIDT INDICATED THAT DISCUSSION OF URANIUM ENRICHMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH SOVIETS SHOULD HAVE BEEN A PRINCIPAL TOPIC OR DISCUSSION. GOLDSCHMIDT EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD BEEN IN OTTAWA WITH GIRARD BEFORE WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS, AND THAT ON LEARNING THAT DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE LED BY VEST, FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAD DECIDED HE SHOULD LEAD FRENCH DELEGATION. HOWEVER, ADVICE WAS RECEIVED IN OTTAWA AFTER GOLDSCHMIDT HAD DEPARTED FOR PARIS.

2. FRENCH CONCERN, ACCORDING TO GOLDSCHMIDT, IS US REQUIREMENT, IN COCOM, FOR RETURN OF TAILS TO FRANCE, WHEN FRENCH NATURAL URANIUM IS DELIVERED TO USSR FOR ENRICHMENT. GOLDSCHMIDT SAID FRENCH STUDIES SHOW THAT RETURN OF TAILS IS NOT NOW ECONOMICAL AND IS THEREFORE MEANINGLESS INCONVENIENCE, SINCE AS MATURE
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NUCLEAR COUNTRY, USSR COULD HARDLY HAVE NEED FOR RESIDUAL U-235

REMAINING IN ENRICHMENT PLANT TAILS. GOLDSCHMIDT SAID THAT US HAD TAKEN POSITION THAT TAILS MUST BE RETURNED IN CONNECTION WITH SEVERAL FRENCH EXPORTS OF URANIUM FOR ENRICHMENT PURPOSES LAST YEAR, AND HAD REITERATED POSITION IN CONNECTION WITH RECENT FRG EXPORT FOR ENRICHMENT IN USSR.

3. KRATZER POINTED OUT THAT RECENT FRG ENRICHMENT ARRANGEMENT INVOLVED NATURAL URANIUM OF US ORIGIN, WHICH, FOR US, COULD PRESENT DIFFERENT ISSUES THAN EXPORT OF FRENCH URANIUM. HE INDICATED THAT HE WAS SURE US WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ISSUE OF RETURN OF TAILS IN CURRENT REVIEW OF SOVIET BLOC NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY.

4. GOLDSCHMIDT ALSO PLACED CONSIDERABLE MORE EMPHASIS ON POSSIBLE SALE OF SMALL FRENCH REACTORS TO SOVIETS, NOT BUILT UNDER US LICENSE, THAN DID GIRARD IN WASHINGTON. ACCORDING TO GOLDSCHMIDT, THESE REACTORS WOULD PROBABLY BE USED BY SOVIETS IN ARCTIC. HE WAS UNCERTAIN WHETHER REACTORS EMPLOYED HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM FUEL, AND THEREFORE WOULD NOT BE PLUTONIUM PRODUCERS, OR WHETHER THEY WERE FUELED WITH SLIGHTLY ENRICHED URANIUM. IN ANY EVENT, HE POINTED OUT, ENRICHMENT WOULD BE FURNISHED BY SOVIETS. GOLDSCHMIDT EXPRESSED LITTLE INTEREST IN REACTOR LICENSING ISSUE EMPHASIZED BY GIRARD, EXPLAINING HE WAS NOT MUCH INVOLVED IN IT, AND SEEMED SOMEWHAT SURPRISED BY ATTENTION GIVEN THIS SUBJECT IN WASHINGTON DISCUSSIONS.

5. GOLDSCHMIDT ALSO REPEATED OBSERVATIONS ON US PAPER FOR SUPPLIERS CONFERENCE WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED PREVIOUSLY. HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO A) MORE DETAILED NATURE OF PAPER THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED; B) INCLUSION OF PROPOSALS WHICH HE CLAIMED HAD NOT BEEN PUT FORWARD PREVIOUSLY; SPECIFICALLY, MANDATORY MULTINATIONAL APPROACH TO REPROCESSING; AND C) ABSENCE OF ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE; I.E., "BRACKETS", AS HAD BEEN SUGGESTED IN LONDON. KRATZER POINTED OUT THAT PAPER HAD BEEN PUT FORWARD FOR DISCUSSION, AND GOLDSCHMIDT AGREED THAT IT PRESENTED NO DIFFICULTIES FROM THIS VIEWPOINT, ALTHOUGH DISCUSSION MIGHT TAKE LONGER THAN FRENCH HAD ANTICIPATED. HIS COMMENTS WERE LOW-KEY AND HE SEEMED TO BE MORE CONCERNED THAT PAPER WOULD LEAD TO MORE EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION (HE HOPES MEETING WILL BE COMPLETED IN ONE DAY), THAN IN SUBSTANCE OF PAPER.

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6.COMMENT: GOLDSCHMIDT'S EMPHASIS ON SUBJECT OF RETURN OF TAILS TO FRANCE, WHICH HE ACKNOWLEDGED WAS MERELY ON INCONVENIENCE, IN CONTRAST TO MUCH MORE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE OF WHETHER FRENCH REACTORS CAN BE SOLD TO USSR IS SOMEWHAT SURPRISING, AND MAY BE RELATED TO PIQUE OVER FACT THAT FRENCH DELEGATION WAS HEADED BY GIRARD RATHER THAN GOLDSCHMIDT. IN ANY CASE, SINCE GOLDSCHMIDT IS OBVIOUSLY A MAJOR PARTICIPANT IN

DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH NUCLEAR EXPORT POLICY, IT WOULD SEEM
DESIRABLE TO GIVE INCREASED ATTENTION TO ISSUE OF RETURN OF
TAILS AFTER ENRICHMENT IN SOVIET UNION. WHERE US NATURAL
URANIUM IS NOT INVOLVED, IT WOULD SEEM US HAS LITTLE INTEREST
IN RETURN OF TAILS, PROVIDED QUANTITY OF NATURAL URANIUM
FURNISHED IN RELATION TO ENRICHED URANIUM DELIVERED
INDICATES THAT TAILS WOULD BE OF ZERO VALUE TO SOVIETS. ANY
PROGRESS WHICH CAN BE MADE ON THIS QUESTION PRIOR TO LONDON
MEETING WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE HELPFUL WITH FRENCH DELEGATION.
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